

PUNCH

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Charivaria

It might now be a good thing if all the neutral observers were asked to stand up so that he could be counted.

"What has happened to the old-fashioned paper-covered penny dreadful?" asks a correspondent. It will reappear this year at about 8s. 6d. net.

The Marksman

You've killed your conscience? This is strange . . . So small a mark, so long a range.



"Duke of Bedford's Railings," says a heading. We've heard them before.

Nowadays we should spare a thought for the modern mother who, owing to national requirements, has no daughter to guide her.

"The FUEHRER always thinks of others," says a Nazi authority. He recently stated that Mr. ROOSEVELT had started the war. The failure of the Russian campaign he attributes to General VON BRAUCHITSCH. The FUEHRER never thinks of himself.

HITLER's personal popularity has waned in Germany, we are told. Many citizens of the Reich did not even wish him a Christmas or a New Year.

A Nazi prisoner in Russia is reported to have admitted that he had two brothers, one alive and the other a military policeman in Paris.

"The Sphinx continues to brood silently over Egypt," says a writer. How unlike the Cairo military spokesman!

Now that Japan has joined in the war there are hopes that a picture will be published of Field-Marshal GOERING in a kimono.



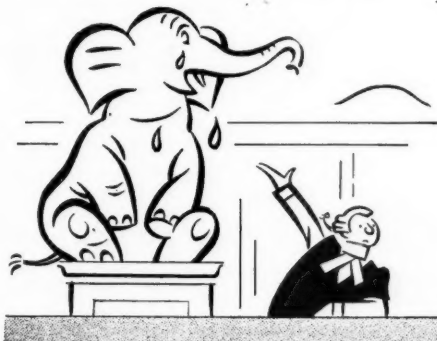
After a brief rest at Berchtesgaden, HITLER is reported to have said that he felt like a new man. That is how many Germans are beginning to feel too.

Mr. CHURCHILL has recently been in Cairo, so Lord Haw-Haw says. Fairly accurate, for him.

Don't-We-All Corner

"You sent a large foreign chump I prefer English chaps even if they are smaller."—Note sent to Butcher.

An animal impersonator says that the hardest part he has ever played was the front of a giraffe in pantomime. He found this particularly difficult because he was handicapped by a stiff neck.



Hang-the-Consequences Corner

"A marriage has been arranged and will take place as soon as present hostilities permit, between . . ."

Notice in Daily Paper.

In a Munich Nazi court a schoolboy was alleged to have thrown a sponge at a circus elephant. Nothing quite like this has happened since Italy declared war on America.

De-Gummed

WHEN the pasty World-Controller
From his quartermaster's stock
Issues a civilian bowler
To von Brauchitsch or von Bock
Should you say their hearts were restive
Wondering what to go and do?
No, I think they spent a festive
Christmas-time like me and you.

When the stout Italian boaster
Using quantities of ink
Writes his generals off the roster,
Round the fire they sit and drink;
Graziani, old field-marshal,
Stellenbosched but still serene
Singing songs—I'm rather partial
To imagining the scene.

But when Mr. Hirohito
(If you'll let me call him that)
Puts some yellow-faced mosquito
On the carpet or the mat,
I can tell you what will happen
If you write and ask me, please,
When the Emperor fires a Japan—
Emperor fires a Japanese.

EVOE.

Two Deep

HELP you to realize what it's like perhaps," said a very tall man in a short square-cut overcoat, "when I tell you that last night there was a queue waiting to go out."

"What does that prove?" a stout lady inquired.

"I don't say it proves anything. I'm just telling you."

The doorkeeper emerged from the restaurant and looked at the queue with distaste, biting his lip.

"Four?" he demanded in a challenging tone.

A party of four instantly peeled off and stood expectant. He put his arm out in a curve and hooked them through the door, pointing: "There—straight along—through—"

The queue closed up its ranks. A man with a heavy, swarthy, discontented face said "Onfair. Favouritizzom."

"But we're only two," said the lady with him placidly.

"Never mind, we were here first. They should have got two twos."

It so happened that at this moment the doorkeeper came out and did ask for two twos. He got them well ahead of this couple.

"Onfair," said the man emphatically. At the same instant a woman just behind him became suddenly audible in the middle of a narrative: "There 'e sat, puttin' Sennacherib in 'is coffee—"

Everyone listened intently. She noticed this, and disappointingly lowered her tone.

A grey-haired officer said to his civilian companion: "Did you get home for Christmas?"

"Just. I got the 4.28—the old 4.15, you know. It didn't leave at 4.28 of course, or I shouldn't have made it."

"But the old 4.15 used not to stop at —"

"I know, but it does now."

The officer observed that the so-called *identity* of a train had always struck him as odd. "Here's the 4.28 which didn't even leave at 4.28, you say, and stops somewhere

quite new—and yet one still thinks of it as 'the old 4.15.' Now what possible justification is there for that?"

A colleague came to have a word with the doorkeeper. All that was audible to outsiders was his last phrase, delivered with a thumb-jerk: "That bloke."

"What bloke?" the doorkeeper asked.

"Seein' about the chap," his colleague explained, and went away.

A sandy-haired private said to a massively-built lance-corporal: "Oh, I couldn't do Mass-Observation. I'm bad at arithmetic. I could never get the percentages to add up right."

"Oh, you wouldn't do the percentages. They do all that at the headquarters. You just send 'em the chunks of ore to work on."

"Oh, that'd be much too indirect for me. Besides, they could never read my writing. People say my writing looks as if I use a rather tousled matchstick."

"Degas," the massive lance-corporal recalled, "did some etchings with the carbon rod out of an arc lamp."

"What of it?" truculently inquired a third soldier just behind them, believing himself addressed.

But nothing came of this.

"Atchly," came a high-pitched untraceable voice from near the end of the queue, "we're quite close into 1942, of course, atchly. And of course but for Japan the war would be nearly over now, atchly."

The tall man in the short overcoat said to the stout lady: "They can't let the war end in 1942. It's too close to what the astrologers and people say. Undermine things if they turned out right."

"After the war," said the stout lady, "they'll be able to control the weather. When there's a drought, I mean, they'll send airmen up very high and get them to weave a cloud with those white streaks. You know what I mean, weave. In and out."

The doors were thrown open unexpectedly. As the queue filed in isolated remarks were left hanging in the air like gems, or pieces of coke—

"Spotlessly clean. As if one would mind spots! . . ."

"Rather interesting about that. It seems Fox or Pitt or somebody—may have been Mary Queen of Scots—"

"He could lick his eyebrows, like a Peke. I tell you I've seen him do it . . ."

"Beats me what the Germans see in Shakespeare. I mean, how does anything get over?" . . .

" . . . like seeing a waiter applaud the floor show . . ."

The doors shut.

R. M.

Achilles' Heel

["Soldiers unfamiliar with the art of darning will receive instructions in the same."—From *Battery Orders in an A.-A. regiment.*]

CAPTAIN or colonel or knight-at-arms,
Commando, sergeant, squad-lance-bombardier—
You trained me in excursions and alarms,
You taught me to garrotte men from the rear,
To bag a Stuka when it screams too near;
I heard you wisely, wittily instruct
How to short-circuit "grids," or mine a pier,
Or even liquidate an aqueduct.
Now is the hour when death is like a light
And blood is like a rose (thanks, G. K. C.!),
But I, though girded for an all-in fight,
Am conscious still of insufficiency.
I wait the final grooming—"Squad, fall in.
Darning, as far as detailed: class, begin."



ARMS FOR THE EAST

"How about shipping this thing now?"

The Zoo Front

IT is all rather sad. The lions roar regularly at 2 P.M. (even that seems wrong because it used to be 3 o'clock), but for the most part they roar to an empty house; the sea-lions frisk and squirm about in the same engaging way, but no shouts of joy greet them when they dive off the high stone slab for a well-aimed fish; and over the place where you used to take tickets for the elephant rides there is a notice: "No more rides. All the elephants have gone to Whipsnade."

Penguin Pool, which used to have as much glamour as a Hollywood bathing party—indeed more to some of us—is now empty except for a few dead leaves swirling round its faded blue basin. The Aquarium is closed.

There are sundry craters and blitzed cages about the place of course, just to remind the animals that they are military objectives, but these are not always easy to detect, because there is a type of Zoological Gardens rococo which is perilously near Bomb-hole Gothic in artistic feeling. So that the loose bit of crag on which the ibex was wont to pose so prettily might be the final artist's touch of the zooscape designer or a bit of coping from Broadcasting House. But anyway this is not the reason for the slight gulp you have in your throat when you wander round the very familiar lay-out; because there is no serious damage and not one animal or bird was hurt, so the keepers will tell you proudly. It's a departed-glory, Hamlet-with-Hamlet-left-out, *autretemps* kind of gulp which assails you in the deserted paths and makes you feel far more attuned to those grim-looking birds who hunch themselves so sadly at Aviary corners, reflecting on their pasts, than you had ever felt before. In peace-time you hurried past them to get in the

monkeys before tea-time or do a quick round of the Giraffe House before it was time to go, but now we, at any rate, found ourselves inclined to linger and shake our head sympathetically and say "I know, old man, I know. It's just too bad."

One thing only holds the same old thrill. Behind the scenes in the Lion House—past those gates labelled "The Public are not allowed beyond these barriers," and into the eerie gloom of a long stone passage, punctuated by empty meat trollies and, overhead, iron arched bridges which lead from the indoor cages to the outside runs. We advanced a little way down this dim exciting alley, when we heard just above our head a hot throaty snarl, and not a yard away, looking into our very eyes was the King of Beasts, as large as life and twice as terrifying. A nonchalant young man in a brown polo jumper and breeches leant against the wall and contemplated him much as my brother watches his son playing football for his school. Pride was well concealed under a correctly deprecating manner. This took the form of contradicting everything we ventured to say, as if it were effrontery on our part to assume psychological knowledge of such a majestic subject. The conversation proceeded on these lines:

Ourselves. I suppose they are quite tame with you.

Young Man. Oh, no, not tame, they aren't.

Ourselves. Really? You mean you couldn't go into the cage with them?

Y.M. Oh, I'd do that all right.

Ourselves. And they wouldn't attack you?

Y.M. Well, I wouldn't say that. They might.

Ourselves. Would they really? I suppose you don't risk it then?

Y.M. Oh, yes, I do that. Every day.

Ourselves. But isn't that rather dangerous?

Y.M. Naow—not with me, it isn't. I've had 'em since they were born y' see.

Ourselves. And I suppose they were quite gentle then?

Y.M. Oh, no, not gentle. I wouldn't say that.

Ourselves. You mean a stranger couldn't have gone into the cage with them?

Y.M. I don't know but what they mightn't of.

Ourselves. I expect you get awfully fond of them, don't you?

Y.M. I dunno. I wouldn't say that.

Ourselves.—

But the young man wasn't listening. The lion had evidently said something to him which we hadn't heard.

"Want yer family?" inquired the young man indulgently, and pulled a lever. Immediately a door opened and a lioness and two cubs jostled against each other in their haste to join the head of the household. We resisted an almost overmastering desire to kiss their noses and passed on, satisfied that the Zoo could never really lose its magic.

M. D.

The Book of Rules

THERE is no shortage of trains in the time-table.

The difficulty is to know where to look for the one you want.

That is how it is with Rules in the Army.

The King's Regulations comprise the "rules" of soldiering, and they run to 807 pages. You cannot therefore carry them in a wallet, which is a pity, for nothing would be nicer than to snap them out frightfully quick whenever you wanted to shut anybody up—like producing the handbook when they are arguing how much you score at bridge for a revoke. 807 pages of rules shows that in the Army anything may crop up any time. Of course it is hard to believe that when Civil Servants were putting their domes of silence together and deciding what people should be allowed to do once they were in the Army and what they should not, some ass actually rose at the back of the hall to ask if it would be permissible for a second lieutenant to wear an eyeglass? Yet this fellow must have hammered away at the



point until he had goaded the Committee, and a ruling *was* given. In paragraph 1011 you have it. "Eyeglasses *may* be worn by *all ranks*." A very good ruling too, for what can it profit the bandy-legged cavalry officer from the shires to gain this indulgence if the N.C.O. i/c Sanitary Squad can also wear one and probably keep it in longer?

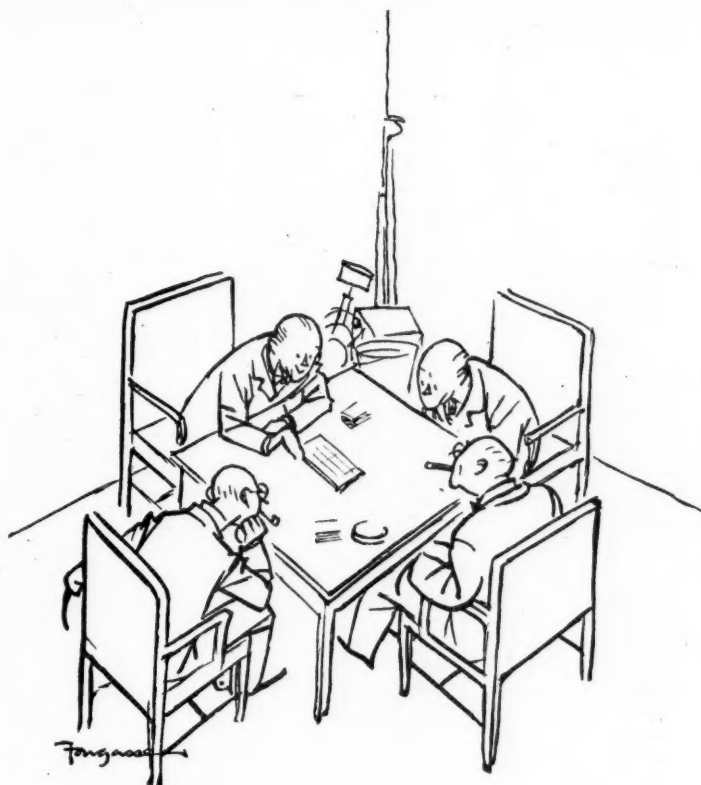
And take whiskers. You appreciate that a sailor does not wear a moustache. For no other reason, as far as I know, except that it would not go at all well with his hat. What of the soldier? Paragraph 1003 outlines etiquette for him.

"The hair of the head will be kept short. The chin and underlip will be shaved." (Note that *underlip*. It rules out, you see, even a nice little goatee beard.) "Whiskers *if worn* will be of moderate length."

The question is not, I submit, "if worn," but "if whiskers." Do they mean sideboards, mutton chops, dundrearies, or those continuous loop-line effects by which the moustache is joined to the hair of the head, enclosing the whole face in a kind of fur frame? If this be permissible, moderate length means, I suppose, the whiskers must not drop below the third button of the tunic, in case the owner be mistaken for a wine-waiter in Iceland.

How does this sub-title appeal by way of light reading?: "Widows, disposal of, on arrival from abroad." If they had said "Erring sons, disposal of, by departure for abroad," there would have been something in it, but with widows arriving I do not see how you can dispose of them, short of pushing them off the quay, which the King's Regulations do not advocate. They probably advise you to meet them and explain that your own house is full and that accommodation is very hard to get in England, so would they stay on the boat till the next stop.

Then consider these two suggestions: "Target practice, attendance of Medical Officer at," and "Snow, removal of, from roofs of buildings." You would have thought that the Medical Officer would have been more useful standing by while people were shovelling snow off the top of the conservatory than he would be in the butts, but actually this is a very sensible precaution. The last time I attended target practice a man who could shut both eyes at once, but not one at a time, was getting the instructor to hold a rolled-up handkerchief over the left eye, while he proceeded to miss the target with nine shots in succession. With the tenth he brought down the red flag



"Well, gentlemen, we start the night with the firewatchers of Messrs. Sharp, Sisley & Co., leading the firewatchers of the Tiptop Trading Company by 3,763,450 points."

and apologized for cutting the halyard. So the Medical Officer would attend target practice, I fancy, not so much to operate his first-aid set, as to psycho-analyse those people who are so frightened of the noise they will make if they press the trigger that they keep turning their heads and looking for the nearest way out.

Here is another interesting query. "Race Meetings, luncheon parties at, charges for." In these days surely the question is not how much is it, but what can you get? I should not have thought it necessary for the military, drawing the generous rations they do, to butt in at purely sporting functions of this sort. The difficulty of getting luncheon not merely at race meetings but in restaurant-cars between London and Scotland is now so intense that rumours are spread by impish mischief-makers, which cause Staff Officers to double from one buffet to another in the belief that *somewhere* delicious

rissoles are being sold. The danger of this sort of thing has probably inspired one other ruling in the book—"Practical Jokes, O.s.c. to check."

Problems have been made as easy as possible for the new member, whether he wishes to know if he keeps his hat on when appearing in Court, or how much the Government are prepared to pay towards the cost of his funeral. It would be nicer still if the recruit could be presented with the complete card as soon as he put on his battle-dress, but I am afraid that 807 pages is beyond the scope of a pocket diary. Officially, the only thing the new member has to know from the very start is that he is "not allowed to criticize." But there is one other King's Regulation which nobody bothers to tell him, possible because he is so unlikely to commit the offence. He is forbidden to "praise an Officer." I suppose this social error *must* have happened once.



"This is what comes of relying on imported oranges."

Ivan

BRAVE work, Ivan! Here's a New Year greeting!
 Rostov! Tikhvin! How those captures fall!
 Rzhev! Kaluga! Evil rides retreating
 Back across the stricken plains he plotted to bethral . . .
Brave work, Ivan!
Comrade of the hidden heart!
Unexpected man of dreams who proved the best of all!

Old bold Ivan! Out in Death's own weather . . .
 Kharkov! Ilmen! How the names come back!
 Borodino . . . once again together!
 Cossacks plunging through the drifts along the tyrant's
 track . . .

Old bold Ivan!
Friend we never learn to know!
Fire among the frozen mists that shone when all was
black!

Tough stuff, Ivan! When the black tide scatters,
 Wings well broken, wheels worn down at last,
 Long-tongued folk may talk of many matters:
 We shall know the name of him who stood and bore the
 blast . . .
Great grim Ivan!
Breaker of dark dynasties!
Victor of his own wide fields that hold the storied past!



MAROONED

"And to think that it was I who started this piracy business!"

Parrots and the R.A.F.

II

AS reported last week, the committee meeting held in the R.A.F. Mess, Prangmere—subject under discussion, parrots—was adjourned pending the attendance of Flying-Officer Flaps' parrot in person.

On resumption the bird in its cage was introduced to Group-Captain Boost, who inquired, well pretty poll how—was a polly then? The parrot said nuts. Flying-Officer Flaps hastily said it didn't really mean it like that, sir, it was merely asking for its staple food, much as Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute might answer a similar query by stating that his was a beer. Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute said well now, that was very kind of Flying-Officer Flaps, he hadn't actually heard his query, but in point of fact his *was* a beer. Flying-Officer Flaps referred back briefly to the parrot's last remark. Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute said all right if he felt like that about it, it could be on him (Lyne-Shute), waiter, two beers.

The parrot then, addressing Group-Captain Boost and Squadron-Leader Undercart, said pretty poll scratch a poll polly, and put its crest up against the cage. Group-Captain Boost quickly said him (Undercart) first, and Squadron-Leader Undercart said after him (Boost), sir. Both then simultaneously

said to Flying-Officer Flaps it was *his* parrot, to go on and scratch its damn dome for it, what was he waiting for? Flying-Officer Flaps said he'd been bitten twice already. Squadron-Leader Undercart said ah, that would be just its play, and Group-Captain Boost said hurry up, it's getting restless.

Flying-Officer Flaps reluctantly complied and then said that made him six times shy, who'd got some plaster? Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute said beer was best, cheeroh, old man.

Pilot-Officer Aircrow said the parrot was looking browned off, what about opening the hangar doors and letting it go out on ops? Pilot-Officer Rudder said lousy idea, they'd lose it; Flying-Officer Flaps said that was ruddy well O.K. by him; Group-Captain Boost said go on, let them see what the bird's performance in flight was like, and Pilot-Officer Rudder said dashed good idea, sir. The parrot pointed out that it was to be Queen of the May, mother, it was to be Queen of the May.

The hangar doors were opened and the parrot taxied out on to the table. Pilot-Officer Nosedyeve said look at it balancing first on one wheel of the undercart and then on the other, wasn't it wizard, he'd love to do that.

Wing-Commander Blower said just let him (Blower) catch him (Nosedyeve) trying it and he (Nosedyeve) would be torn off an imperial strip.

Group-Captain Boost said what was the parrot waiting for? Pilot-Officer Prune said perhaps the met report wasn't favourable, certainly there was nine-tenths cloud in the Mess, mostly Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute's pipe. The parrot said cocky-cocky-cocky some eighteen times, and Flying-Officer Talespin suggested it was calling up the Aerodrome Control and wanted a green on the Aldis lamp.

Group-Captain Boost said nonsense, shoo, and the parrot abruptly took off and gained height rapidly. Pilot-Officer Nosedyeve said wizard, Wing-Commander Blower said now it was in flight one could see that it was an up-to-date operational type, and Squadron-Leader Undercart said yes, he would describe it as a grey mid-wing monoplane with retractable under-carriage, heavily armoured front turret and high yellow astro-dome.

The parrot started a series of square searches, and Pilot-Officer Prune said it was looking for "Intruders." Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute said he hoped it wasn't looking for ground targets, and rapidly finished his beer.

Calling up ground control, the parrot asked what was to be done with a drunken sailor. Pilot-Officer Prune told it. The parrot said, chuckle-chawkaloo. Group-Captain Boost asked what did it say, and Pilot-Officer Aircrow said he thought it had switched over to the intercom and was telling the crew about Pilot-Officer Prune.

At this point the parrot sighted the Mess cat on the hearthrug and carried out a series of determined attacks from the red and green quarters alternately. The cat was badly panicked at first, but during the last attack put up a burst of flak with the right paw that severely damaged the parrot's rear turret. Several pieces of tail-plane fell off and the parrot broke off the combat, steering a course straight out of the door with clouds of blue language pouring from it.

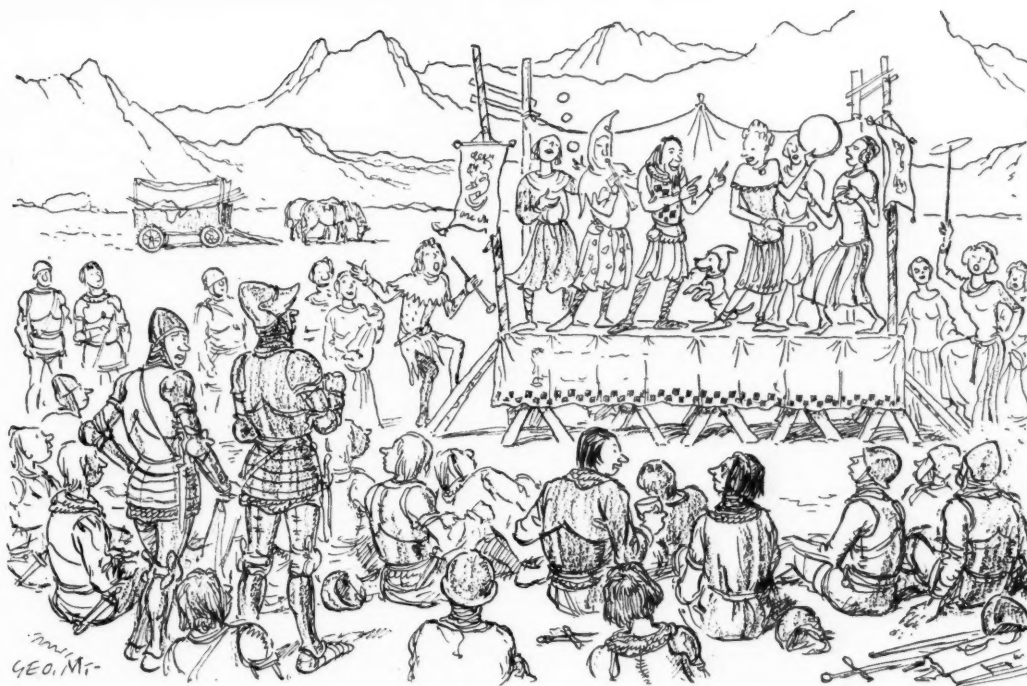
Flying-Officer Flaps said thank God for that. Flight-Lieutenant Lyne-Shute said it was his (Flaps') turn now and his (Lyne-Shute's) was another beer.

The committee then adjourned.
A. A.



"Personally, I think they're carrying this camouflage business too far."

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Very decent of them—coming all this way to entertain the troops."

Little Talks

I FIND I can't imagine this sort of war—can you?

How d'you mean?

Well, I mean, I read everything in all the papers but it never seems to give me a picture of the thing. I mean, what exactly happens when General Stinkenhausen launches a drive?

Why do they always launch drives, by the way?

It's the done thing. You don't even make an attack nowadays. It's launched.

Can you launch a pincer?

I doubt that. But you could launch a pincer movement, of course.

"Launch" is about top-word now.

What about "static"? In the Government announcement about conscription it said that men over forty would be employed on "sedentary or static duties" only.

What's the difference?

Well, "sedentary" means you're mainly sitting, and "static," I suppose, means that you're nearly always standing up.

Well, but suppose you said "I can't run. I don't like sitting about, but I'm pretty good at standing"—what job would they give you?

Permanent sentry-duty, perhaps.

Sentries aren't static. They march up and down.

Mess-waiter, then.

So do waiters.

Well, I dunno. Barman, then.

And if your duties are neither sedentary nor static, what are they?

"Current," I expect. No—"ambulatory." No, I know—"mobile."

Well, now. Tell me another thing.

What is "static water"?

Well, it's the water in those special fire-tanks you see about the town. But I can't imagine why.

Surely it ought to be "sedentary water"?

I agree. Or perhaps "recumbent water"?

Good. When they call up the sixties I suppose they'll be kept for "sedentary or supine duties."

But let's get back to this battle. In

the old days everything was quite clear. You had one line on this side of the hearth-rug and another line on the other. And when you wanted to attack the fireplace—

Launch a drive, old boy.

No. I don't think we ever launched drives in those days. Anyhow, you started by bombarding the fender, the fireplace, the grate, the chimney, and everything behind it.

That's all right. Only now you don't "bombard" the fender. You "plaster" it.

All right. Well, but then—after that—the troops advanced. Either they were wiped out or pushed back—in which case the old lines remained and everybody knew where they were, or else they pushed on a bit—and after a day or two there was a nice new set of lines, and everybody knew where they were.

Whereas, now?

Well, nobody ever seems to know where anybody is—and I, at least, can never imagine what anybody is doing.



"How many times must I tell you not to say 'Heil Hitler' with your mouth full?"

Well, of course, I think you've got to get the new P.P.P. conception into your head before you can begin to understand—

P.P.P.?

"Pincers, Pockets and Perimeters." Take this hearth-rug, now. You don't attack it frontally. Nobody ever does. As I've explained, you launch a pincer movement in the modern way—so.

In the old days we used to call it a flank attack—so.

Yes. But this is much more of a surprise.

I don't see why. As you've just said, nobody does anything else.

Well, anyhow. Here, on the left, comes your northern prong—

Prong?

Prong.

But I thought this was a pincer?

Yes.

Do pincers have prongs?

Well, call it a claw. Round it goes—here—

Half a minute. Before I launch this claw do I do artillery preparation in the ordinary way?

What? Well, yes, I suppose so.

Then how is it a surprise?

Well, I think it depends.

Depends on what?

Wait a bit. Here am I, you see, shifting troops to the northward (these coals are my reserves) to meet your threat to my exposed flank.

Jolly good show.

And then—of course you seize your moment—you fling in your southern prong—

Claw.

Claw—and menace my unprotected left flank—so.

Your right flank was exposed—and your left flank was unprotected?

Yes.

You don't seem to have made very good arrangements.

Well, of course, we don't know how I come to be holding this hearth-rug. I

might be the spearhead of a thrust from the East—

Gracious!

Or perhaps a dangerous salient.

Golly!

Or possibly the spearhead of another pincer movement.

Do pincers have spearheads now?

Well, you know—a claw. Don't be tiresome.

Sorry. But that raises a most interesting point. Here am I with my two claws curling round your flanks—like that.

That's right. And I am now a pocket.

Oh, you're a pocket now?

Well, a virtual pocket.

Christmas! What's that?

Well, you see, these are your spearheads—

Claws—prongs.

Claws. Here—and there. But they're not meeting yet. You haven't actually encircled my perimeter.

At the Play

"OLD ACQUAINTANCE" (APOLLO)

WHAT is wrong with the modern theatre is perhaps what is wrong with so much of the modern world: it has lost its moral sense. Drama has always thriven on the conflict of good and evil; tragedy has mainly bewailed the failure of the man who meant to be good and was found to be not quite good enough, while comedy has delighted to mock the downfall of the man who meant to be far better than his fellows and turned out to be a prig or a fraud. Remove the sense of good and evil and what can drama do then?

Well, it can rely on surface wit, as it did after the Restoration. The characters of CONGREVE, for example, made up for behaving very ill by speaking very well. Their wit was as fine as their periwigs and they understood the nice conduct of an English sentence as well as that of a clouded cane. The heirs of their attitude to life, whereby all conduct is judged by the material or sensual comfort which it produces, were to be found a year or two ago in the modish quarters of our capital cities, especially in New York. In a play like CLARE BOOTHE'S *The Women*, and now in Mr. JOHN VAN DRUTEN'S *Old Acquaintance*, you meet ladies who might just as well be called Fainall, Wishfort, and so on. If any men appear, Sparkish or Fopling will do for them.

The similarity between 1690 and 1940 lies in the absence of ethical standards. The difference is a discarding of style. Wit has become wise-cracking. In *Old Acquaintance* we meet two mature American women-novelists; one is clever, one is silly, and both are cats. The first acts as a kind of warden to the daughter of the second: the crux of the play is that both warden and ward, women of a different generation, are in love with the same man, an unimpressive good-looker of intermediate age. But is not love altogether too high and honourable

a term for people like these who appear to be simply following their own notions of what will be most fun? Marriage is occasionally spoken of in this world of "affairs," but it is a very long way from holy matrimony.

MISS BOOTHE was logically ruthless in her picture of *The Women*. Mr. VAN DRUTEN lacks the heart to be thus heartless in a play which might be called "Two Cats and a Kitten." Whether in discussing the future of the younger couple or in recording (very amusingly) the feline hissings and scratchings and final reconciliatory purrings of the women-novelists, he lets the better nature intermittently

in the Pacific Ocean has blown some of it up: that would be no pity.

The two women-novelists—human nature red in ink and claw—are admirably brought into acrimonious action by Miss EDITH EVANS and Miss MARIAN SPENCE with the nicest possible contrast of the cleverness which is caviar to the general public and the fluffiness which is candy for all. There is a great duel, Miss MURIEL PAVLOW gives a hard edge to the hard little party she represents, while Mr. RONALD WARD, with miraculous skill, persuades us to be interested in a totally uninteresting young attaché to the worlds of book-sales and smart parties, who flits in a polite way between his publishing and his transient amours. Very tiny do these amours seem, so far from passion and rhetoric are these modern lovers. Whenever this one leaves the room it is as though a pin had dropped. But how neatly Mr. WARD drops it! I. B.



FELINE AMENITIES

Katherine Markham MISS EDITH EVANS
Mildred Watson Drake MISS MARIAN SPENCE

intrude upon the worse; he even ends, as a preacher might say, on a note of hope. But one cannot help feeling all the time how much more interesting it would be if the little bundles of self-indulgence who are his characters were real human beings from the start—people from whose vocabulary the words "ought" and "should" have not yet vanished. *Old Acquaintance* is a neat, accomplished and most ably-presented picture of a brittle social set which we were just forgetting without much sense of loss, a valedictory gesture, a kind of "Good-bye to All That." Mr. VAN DRUTEN, however tiresome his puppets, is never tiresome himself. The gesture is amusingly and graciously made, but the world he presents seems far away and long ago. Perhaps a recent series of explosions

music-hall, is not for them. They are none of your small, shrinking, waif-like clowns who delight us by emerging from their own panic to score a point and then scuttle back to their original cover. Instead they are out in the open, chin up, eyes sparkling, and tongue wagging twenty to the dozen.

In Mr. TRINDER'S case the chin is up indeed. Far more substantial than the wan and twittering little Lancashire lads whose faces comically recede into their gullets, he is full of pride, pugnacity and mischief: he overflows from the stage, converses with his audience, discusses the price of matinée teas or the affairs of the late-comers in the stalls, and reminds the public when all is over that, while they may have suffered much, they will suffer even harder things if they try to get their

"GANGWAY" (PALLADIUM)

Mr. TOMMY TRINDER succeeds Mr. MAX MILLER as the star attraction at the Palladium. It is change of man rather than of manner. Both impersonate "the bad lad" with a gloriously aggressive impudence. The comedy of pathos, so common a conqueror in the English

money back. It is not a case of suggesting that you meet this most forthcoming and abundant comedian. Get within a hundred yards of him and he will certainly meet you. In his company it is no question of sitting back and settling down. He makes you sit up, wake up, and cheer up.

His associates include Miss BEBE DANIELS and Mr. BEN LYON. These vivid and engaging American players stayed on to entertain England during years when another address would have been far more comfortable. They have won myriads of friends as *Hi Gangsters* "on the air," and they are very slick entertainers on the stage. Miss DANIELS has the right as well as the ability to sing patriotically of London Town, and Mr. LYON lends a light quick touch to the comedy sketches, and these need all the help they can get.

At the xylophone Mr. TEDDY BROWN massively presides with such an air of detachment that one feels perfectly capable of mastering his box of tricks at sight and of having any melody immediately on tap. Vocalism has stylish representatives in Miss ANNE ZEIGLER and Mr. WEBSTER BOOTH. There is abundance of dancing and some good old tunes are sensibly revived as well as new ones. The sketches are of no great account: the economical staging intermittently pleases: the "chorines" abound and decorate: but it is the personalities on whom *Gangway* depends. Mr. GEORGE BLACK need not worry. Miss DANIELS and Mr. LYON are hosts in themselves as well as being distinguished guests, while Mr. TOMMY TRINDER triumphantly overflows with what Mr. Yellowplush called "lacy alley and easy pleasantry." The Palladium is a vast mansion to warm and conquer: he makes it as intimate and cosy as a cottage. I. B.

The Famous Regiment

THE spectacle of Captain Romanescu draped enormously in British battle-dress sent me into a goggling trance from which I emerged to find him in the thick of his explanation.

"So I say to Edmirelty: 'How is this nonsense? Always it is the semm; so sorry there is no destroyers to-day, not ivven smoll gonboat, but if I like, Ministry for War Trensport will give me commend of cargo ship. This is very fony business—maybe there is somm enemy of me in this Edmirelty, I think.

Very well; I will not tekk cargo ship. I will go to British Army for trenning and efter we will mekk Balkanian Army of Balkanians in England . . .

"You like this uniform?" he asked suddenly, standing up and turning round slowly. "Is very nice, I think. Is free.

"I am very locky also because this," he tapped the county regimental badge in his cap, "is most femmous regiment of British Army, I think. Sure. I em ridding somm book about it, can tell you many stories. At bettle colled Blenheim our regiment is always edvencing, ivven when enemy is shooting. Duke of Marlbroo is very plizzed about this. There is jokk, too, about our regiment in bettle called

WORLD WAR

THE British Navy is now facing danger in most of the seas of the world. Remember, it is to the sacrifices of these sailors that you owe many of the comforts of civilized life which you still enjoy. In return, will you not contribute to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? A gift to this Fund enables you to express your gratitude in tangible form. You owe it to our sailors to see that they are well provided with extra comforts this winter. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Badajoz. Duke of Wellington say: 'Who is this femmous regiment, Hill, is scelling thet pellsedds so nicely?' Hill say: 'Thet is femmous Regiment One-Seven-Seven.' Duke of Wellington say: 'Then it is demmfines regiment of British Army, I think. I will mekk somm nice new collars for this femmous regiment.'

"In Bettle of Somme it is the semm. Duke of Hegg is surprize how this regiment is so femmous. Motto of our regiment is somm Lettin words minning 'Stop for Nothing.' Is strict rule for us. I will tell you somm exemple.

"This morning we are mekking somm little manœuvres. Mr. Higgs is commander of my platoon, say to me: 'Corporel Romanescu, I will mekk somm smoll pincer movement, I think, for cepturing those enemy cheps in thet wood there. Tekk your half-section round by this road there, cetch them from behind.' I say: 'Certainly, Sir. Stop for Nothing.'

"My men comm et once—no

question, no arguing—always our regiment is like this. We go very quiet, very sickret. In this road is big house with nice garden, only very smoll hedge, izzy to break down. It is the best way, I think, most sickret. In this garden there is a colonel and somm leddies picking somm flowers. He is of somm regiment is jealous of us. It is the Guards, I think.

"We comm through this garden, only wevving to him very quiet, because enemy is near. He see it is not Guards Regiment, comm over to me shouting very loud. 'Who this hell are you?' he say. I say: 'How do you do, Sir. I am Lance-Corporel Romanescu, of Six Bettelion Norsex Regiment, is most femmous regiment of British Army, I think.' He say: 'What the demm are you doing in my garden?' I say: 'I can explenn this, bot, plizz, Colonel, not shouting so loud because enemy is near. We are mekking pincer movement. It is very interesting.' He say: 'I don't understend what you minn for comming into my garden.' I say: 'You don't understend this pincer movement? It is lovely movement, will be very nice for your regiment also, I think. When I hev cepture this enemy I will comm beck and explenn.' He say: 'I will see your Commanding Officer.' I say: 'Very well, if you like best. He can explenn this movement very well also. I most go now.' All the time he is shouting about his little hedges. This is very shemmful in such a colonel. It is not scorch earth policy, I think.

"When I am livving cemp this afternoon I see this Guards colonel comming in. You think perhaps he is mekking somm trouble? You think maybe I shall be Orderly Room to-morrow? . . . Yes, maybe . . . It is a pity . . . In shop window over this stritt here there is somm carpets, jost smoll bot very nice. You think maybe if I livv one of this carpets to-night in Commanding Officer's hot? . . . You think it is not good schimm? . . . Maybe you are right . . . It is a pity."

A. M. C.

Announcement

"Monday is the anniversary of the German invasion of Russia, six months ago to-day." *Sunday Paper.*

"More than 44,000,000 births were recorded in the United States between 1915 and 1939, according to the Census Bureau. Of these, there were 72 cases of Esperanto is being urged in quadruplets."

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Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Dove Over the Waters

WHEN you have fought in one war and done your best in the shirkers' interval that succeeded to stave off another, you have more right and power than most people to distinguish between the blacks, whites and greys of this one. There are now, suggests Mr. H. M. TOMLINSON, two fronts: the obvious and necessary fight against the powers of darkness without, and the equally obvious and necessary fight against the powers of darkness within; and it is urgent to remember that the measures taken to combat the first are inevitably leading to a very dangerous preponderance of the second. Can the individualists, the creators, the lovers of God, home and country, fight on the first front while they hold the second—which in every land is a threatened cross-section of the first? "Truth is war's first casualty," "Plato is less than a chemical factory"; but *The Wind is Rising* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 5/-) and one hopes beyond hope for a great winnowing of grain from chaff. This is the under-song of a magnanimous and exhilarating commentary on our times, a civilian war-diary whose striking pictures of exterior events are merely the accoutrements and panoply of the fighting spirit we most need.

A Well-Remembered Voice

There have been poets who were also critics, but few who publicly criticized their own poems. To their number may now be added Mr. GEOFFREY FABER, whose volume of collected poems, *The Buried Stream* (FABER, 8/6), is addressed to two different and, it may be, almost irreconcilable sorts of reader. In the admirable preface Mr. FABER's voice is unmistakably of the present, whereas in the poems themselves, which date from 1908 to 1940, he speaks the

language of a generation as remote in some respects as though it were an age away. For this is the poetry not of yesterday but of history. The pleasure it gives comes less from what is personal in it—though it is easy to concede the "certain individuality" modestly claimed for it—than from its reminder of all the other young poets who sang, as we cannot now, during the last war. The earlier poems especially have a typical grace and fluency (which every now and then almost outrun the thought, though this too is typical) and show anew the extraordinary ability of those young men to express themselves simply and musically and with a homeliness, a feeling for concrete objects, that was also, in some way, both romantic and touching. It is slightly disconcerting, however, to find that the later poems are not essentially different from the early ones, and in his preface Mr. FABER appreciates and accounts for our difficulty here. For the preface, though short, gives an excellent statement of the changes and vagaries of poetry in the last twenty years and suggests openly, what one had sometimes suspected, that in spite of superficial concern with economics, poetry to-day is deeply romantic in a special sense.

Sickert

Overcome perhaps by the importance of his subject, Mr. ROBERT EMMONS begins *The Life and Opinions of Walter Richard Sickert* (FABER, 25/-) in a solemn, digressive and rather irritatingly didactic manner. There is also a tendency from time to time to slide into obituary clichés, as well as a calm assumption throughout that no particle of SICKERT's views on anything connected with art can possibly be wrong, although a few naughty critics have now and then been audacious enough to challenge them. But this is the worst one can say of the book, which is valuable, entertaining and instructive and will be very much treasured. It is an account of SICKERT's life interwoven with quotations long and short from his writings, most of which have appeared in ephemeral publications but are well worth saving whether one agrees with all of them or not. His great knowledge and many definite opinions he expresses



"I've got the licence, Roscoe—now for Gretna Green!"



THE HARDSHIPS OF HOME.

Young Officer (back from the trenches, on ninety-six hours' leave). "UGH! THIS IS HORRIBLE—HAVING TO TAKE ALL YOUR CLOTHES OFF AND GET BETWEEN COLD SHEETS!"

F. H. Townsend, January 6th, 1915

with a calculatedly mischievous brightness and pungency of metaphor reminiscent of SHAW'S. There are between thirty and forty full-page reproductions of his paintings and drawings as well as many brilliant smaller sketches used as tailpieces to chapters. All who draw or paint or wish to learn, all who appreciate pictures, will find the account of and advice on technique helpful and stimulating, the criticism informative, the narrative highly readable, and the scores of pictures full of delight.

Cookery for the Beleaguered Castle

The delightful recipes "for unrationed foods" so expertly presented by Miss ANN GURNEY and so charmingly illustrated by Miss KATHARINE OGILVY are, with a few hopeful exceptions, merely tantalising to the shop-bound housewife. Most of the suggestions in *Rational Cookery*

(MEDICI PRESS, 1/-) could still take shape, however, in one of those Franco-Scottish châteaux with slaty turrets, a policy overrun with rabbits, a dove-cot well stocked with fat Montauban pigeons, a poultry-yard and a deer-forest. And any capable rustic matron with a rabbit-hutch and a pen of bantams could emulate the castle's exploits on their homelier and better side—the rabbit and egg recipes are particularly good. Her cat too might bring her in a grey squirrel—he would scorn to eat it himself—in which case she can "proceed as for chicken pie." We others can console ourselves with some not impossibly cheesy cheese dishes, an excellent sheep's-head brawn, chocolate puddings, honey-cakes, and bread (sour milk and caraway) which should prove a welcome change from the Woolton loaf. The more elusive dainties will furnish enough bed-time reading to inspire the most ambitious dreams of post-war culinary achievement.



The Dhobi-Firm

SO much has been written in noble and dignified strain about the Friendships of Man that it always surprises me that the dhobi-firm aspect of the matter has never been touched on.

On land, if you like a fellow you golf with him, play cards with him, drink with him, swap gardening lies with him and generally make holiday with him. At sea you start up in business as a dhobi-firm with him. It is the unfailing criterion of friendship on board. I have no doubt that had David and Jonathan been sailors they would have been a firm. Taff and Jonno they would have been called, and you would have found them, any afternoon they were off watch, in the wash-place, battling at the suds together in silent sociability.

There are various ways of making a little money on the side on board ship.

The matelot with any pretensions to tonsorial skill, or at any rate with a pair of sharp scissors and some clippers, is certain of a steady stream of six-pences all through the dog-watches. Others devote their leisure to contriving chromatic woollen rugs which they subsequently raffle, to tinting photographs of sweethearts, wives, and children, and to making tiny models of ships of the Royal Navy. On board with us we even had a fellow who made a kaleidoscope for his own amusement, and was thereafter besieged with more orders for them than he could cope with. But the dhobi-firm remains the most popular form of profitable hobby. In fact in most ships you'll find almost as many firms as there are customers.

What do you require to set up as a firm? Well, first of all, as I have indicated, you require an "oppo"—a

partner, for the whole firm is but the pledge of a friendship; a bucket of your own, or even a tin bath if you are going to be a fairly superior sort of firm; plenty of bars of "pusser's" soap; a line over which you have a kind of squatter's-rights in one of the boiler-rooms for drying blankets and hammocks; and, if possible, interest with the chef to win for you permission to dry the "smalls" in his galley. It is also customary to scorn the electric-iron that is the communal property of your mess-deck and possess one of your own. You are then a firm, and nothing remains but to advertise—which you do by circularizing the ship verbally.

"Me an' Scouse is a firm now," you inform everybody.

They offer their felicitations and inquire when you propose collecting the laundry.

"I'll look down to-morrer night,"
you promise.

And the next night you duly descend the steel ladders of the neighbouring mess-decks and find large piles of blue-jean collars, cotton-flannels, hammocks and bed-covers awaiting you.

If you have any sense you undertake to wash the collars and flannels yourself and hand over the hammocks and bed-covers to Scouse (who owes his unlovely name to nothing more significant than being a Liverpudlian); for a hammock is a devilish thing to wash, especially when still reasonably new. You swab clean a patch of the wash-place deck and spread the stiff canvas rectangle thereon. You souse it with pails of water, and then fall on it furiously with soap and scrubbing-brush. You souse it again. And you are just thinking that it really doesn't look so bad, when the ship rolls and a flood of dirty water comes rollicking out from under the hand-basins where it has been lurking and gurgles happily all over your handiwork and messes it up completely. And you murmur something nautical and start all over again.

I'm not sure that blankets aren't even worse. There is quite a technique to washing a blanket. That too is spread out on the deck, soaked and soaped. Then, stripped naked, you stand on it with your bare feet, and proceed to shuffle about like some savage invoking his heathen deity. This way and that you sway as you work the soap in with your toes, panting and sweating and grunting, until the onlooker can almost hear the tom-toms. It is first-rate exercise, washing a blanket. It soon gives you a surprisingly good figure. But, on the whole, it is certainly better to leave it to your oppo and busy yourself genteelly with the smalls. You can take them out in their pail of suds on to the upper-deck and squat just in the shelter of the foc's'le-break, where you miss the comments of those who, wishing to wash only themselves, hold strong views on the subject of wash-places cluttered up with dhobi-firms.

And, finally, you deliver your dhobing to your customers, promising to collect the money next pay-day, and you and your oppo sit back and try to add up how much money you have made to spend next time you have a run ashore. A pleasant preoccupation from which you are only aroused by the sudden realization that, in the rush of trade, certain essentials have been overlooked, and you have got to scurry around and try to borrow a clean blue-jean collar from somebody for Sunday morning Divisions.

A Papuan Holiday

"They marched down three abreast, each clad in his cleanest garments, saluted the Magistrate, and clapped their hands delightedly. All were very jovial, and obviously got a thrill out of taxpaying, to which they had been looking forward for weeks."—*Report on the local payment of Income Tax by a Resident Magistrate of Papua.*

THE Papuans are widely known
To be a merry folk;
They have, I'm bound to say,
their own
Ideas of a joke;
A thing I normally dislike
Is being touched for money,
Which seems, incredibly, to strike
The Papuan as funny.

Take as a case the Income Tax;
Critics might well detect
That when I pay my bearing lacks
The carnival effect;
I fill the cold Exchequer's gape
With patriotic fervour,
But joy might easily escape
A casual observer.

But he, with what a merry shout
He greets the festal day,
How happily he sallies out
To pay, ye gods, to pay,
And flaunting high the gay receipt
Sets the wild echoes ringing,
As home he speeds on gladsome feet
Singing, I ask you, singing.

And may the local powers take heed
Lest custom should relax
This rare delight—unique indeed—
For paying Income Tax,
Let them stick on a casual lump
In large and generous measure,
And every Papuan will jump
Out of his skin with pleasure.
DUM-DUM.



"If you MUST know, I'd like it thick, auburn, wavy and parted on the left."

News from Iceland

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I am writing this in bed. I have just finished darning four pairs of socks, all of which seem to have developed holes in identical places. I am wondering if my feet are deformed or whether the designers of socks have views on what may be called the optimum shape of human feet and with true æsthetic obstinacy decline to cope with individual deviations. I am also conscious that I am dry, warm and comfortable.

I am getting rather to like darning socks. It is of course an acquired taste; at first I was disappointed that my batman seemed unable to learn. In his view, holes in socks can best be obliterated by sewing the sides of the hole together. He fails to realize that by so doing the superficial area of the sock is reduced whilst that of the foot remains constant. So now I am proud of the closely-knitted warp and woof effect which I can produce and which remains intact long after it has torn away from the original sock into which it was sewn. Perhaps I am getting a little smug over this. But the main point is that I am lying in bed and am dry, warm and comfortable.

In fact I have just returned from an exercise.

It is possible that you may have wondered from time to time whether I am actually engaged in any form of military activity. I am, and only reasons of security have prevented me from describing to you in detail my many and varied activities in the office. But I see no harm in the enemy knowing that occasionally we do have exercises and that occasionally I do take part in them.

The one just concluded was quite an elaborate one. It centred in the possession of a hypothetical brewery

(if it had been a real brewery it would have been no exercise; casualties on a large scale would have been incurred), and this brewery happened to be situated well in the hinterland. We had to "secure" it, as the saying is. To which end we spent a night in the open; at six we left our lairs and moved grimly forward in the darkness. It was then raining. By six-thirty it became apparent that our transport would not be with us for long. By midday we were well into the hills and in contact with the enemy. By three the brewery was in the centre of a no-man's-land and was being steadily reduced to ruins by our artillery, with the result (as seems frequently the case in war) that the enemy was prevented from using it whilst we ourselves derived no benefit from it whatsoever. The exercise then finished and we thought of returning home.

I wish I had the pen of a great writer: Dante or the author of *Moby Dick*. What an opportunity! Imagine a circle of hills, bare lava-strewn hills reaching upwards to low cloud. It is blowing hard and the rain has turned to sleet. There is a single track, a narrow thread of ground from which the larger stones have been removed. The mud is about a foot deep; there seems to be no reason why it should have any bottom at all, the ground is so waterlogged. Every fifty yards or so is a vehicle. All are stationary. In some cases short-sighted optimism prevails and the back wheels revolve in the mud, bedding the truck more deeply into the mire. In others the driver has abandoned hope and sits on the running-board, perhaps sobbing quietly to himself. In still other cases the driver has disappeared; perhaps sickened of it all, he has sought consolation in the lonely hills. Beside a

still-rising stream twenty-three motorcycles lie, the drivers hoping that perhaps prayer and fasting may lead to some small miracle and dry their magnetos. In the middle of the stream is an abandoned staff-car. It bears a label with the bitter mocking words, "Control Staff."

And all around plod the infantry. They know, as infantry always do at the back of their minds, that, mechanized or not, the odds are that on this kind of occasion they will have to march back. So, for some reason, they start to sing.

We did get back, of course. We got all the vehicles out. We mended the track or made a new one. We pulled and we pushed; we laughed and we swore. We got tired, almost dozed off, then woke again to that state of cold bitter efficiency that follows. We drank every kind of fluid in all kinds of mixtures. No one got pneumonia. And to-morrow we shall have a conference and realize that we have learnt a number of valuable lessons.

I have learnt one very good lesson: it is very pleasant to be dry, warm and comfortable and to be in bed darning socks.

My batman, Gunner Killey, wants to send you a message. He wants to make it clear that we in Iceland do not associate ourselves with the descriptions our recent Press visitors have given of the country. He is afraid that it may not generally be realized that the one banana tree photographed is not part of luxurious groves of tropical growth, and that the number of green-houses producing grapes is extremely small. In short, as he puts it: "If Iceland's like what them reporters say, then 'Yde Park's a flaming lava field."

I concur.

Your loving Son, HAROLD.

Here ends My Two



Hundred and First Volume

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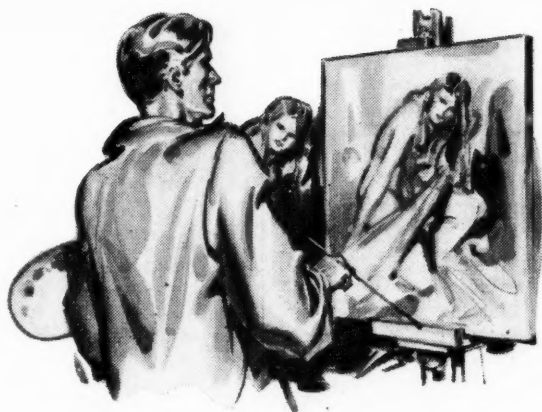
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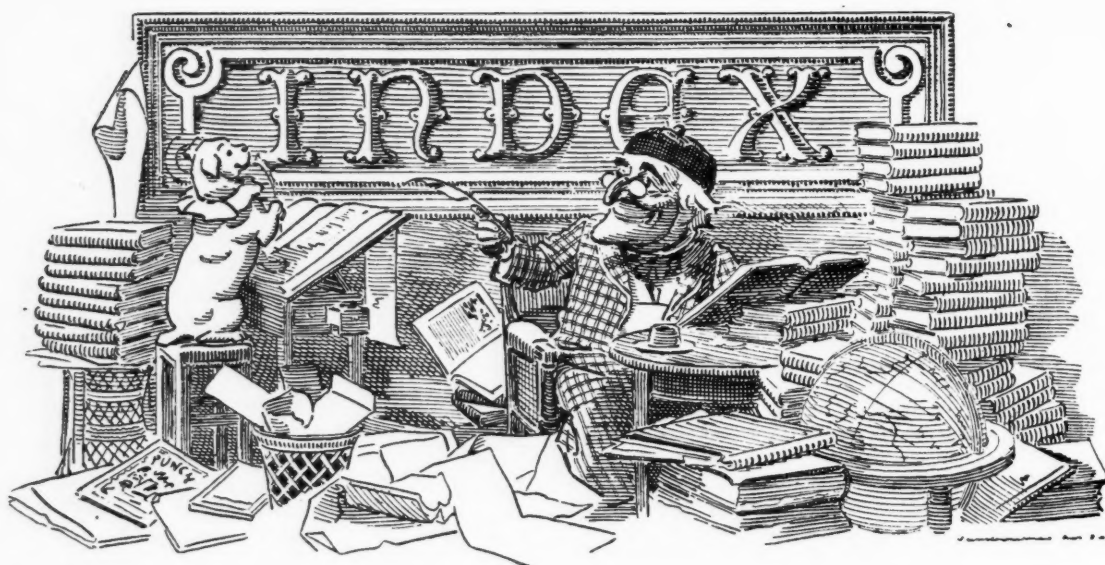


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